

WORLD POETRY

FALL 2018



Pink and Rose, by William Morris via The Metropolitan Museum of Art is licensed under CC0 1.0

What is the World?

Well, say you the world is a chamber of sleep,
And life but a sleeping and dreaming?
Then I too would dream: and would joyously reap
The blooms of harmonious seeming;
The dream-flow'rs of hope and of freedom, perchance,
The rich are so merrily reaping;--
In Love's eyes I'd fancy the joy of romance;
No more would I dream Love is weeping.

Or say you the world is a banquet, a ball,
Where everyone goes who is able?
I too wish to sit like a lord in the hall
With savory share at the table.
I too can enjoy what is wholesome and good,
A morsel both dainty and healthy;
I have in my body the same sort of blood
That flows in the veins of the wealthy.

A garden you say is the world, where abound
The sweetest and loveliest roses?
Then would I, no leave asking, saunter around
And gather me handfuls of posies.
Of thorns I am sure I would make me no wreath;
(Of flowers I am very much fonder).
And with my beloved the bowers beneath
I'd wander, and wander, and wander.

But ah! if the world is a battlefield wild,
Where struggle the weak with the stronger,
Then heed I no storm and no wife and no child!--
I stand in abeyance no longer;--
Rush into the fire of the battle nor yield,
And fight for my perishing brother;
Well, if I am struck--I can die on the field;
Die gladly as well as another....

from: Project Gutenberg's *Songs of Labor and Other Poems*, by Morris Rosenfeld
(to Rose Mallinger, the Brothers Rosenthal, and others taken from this world, October 27, 2018)

Time-Stone

Hallo, Metropolitan--
Ubiquitous windows staring all ways,
Red eye notching the darkness.
No use to ogle that slip of a moon.
This midnight the moon,
Playing virgin after all her encounters,
Will break another date with you.
You fuss an awful lot,
You flight of ledger books,
Overrun with multiple ant-black figures
Dancing on spindle legs
An interminable can-can.
But I'd rather... like the cats in the alley... count time
By the silver whistle of a moonbeam
Falling between my stoop-shouldered walls,
Than all your tally of the sunsets,
Metropolitan, ticking among stars.

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Sun-Up and Other Poems*, by Lola Ridge

El Cielo De Leopardi

¡Genio infeliz! en su primer momento
A su amiga la muerte le decía:
—«Dame la nada, esa región vacía
En que no hay ni placer ni sufrimiento.
Donde se halla la vida está el tormento. 15
Dame paz en la nada—repetía,—
Y mata con el cuerpo el alma mía,
Esta amarga raíz del pensamiento.»

Al oírle implorar de esta manera
Consolando al filósofo afligido, 20
La muerte le responde:—«Espera, espera;
Que en paga de lo bien que me has querido,
Mañana te daré la muerte entera
Y volverás al sér del que no ha sido.»

Ramón de Campoamor y Campoosorio
(1817–1901)

from: The Project Gutenberg eBook, *A Spanish Anthology*,
Edited by Jeremiah Denis Matthias Ford

XXXI

Love, let the wind cry
On the dark mountain,
Bending the ash-trees
And the tall hemlocks,
With the great voice of
Thunderous legions,
How I adore thee. 5

Let the hoarse torrent
In the blue canyon,
Murmuring mightily
Out of the grey mist
Of primal chaos,
Cease not proclaiming
How I adore thee. 10

Let the long rhythm
Of crunching rollers,
Breaking and bellowing
On the white seaboard,
Titan and tireless,
Tell, while the world stands,
How I adore thee. 15 20

Love, let the clear call
Of the tree-cricket,
Frailest of creatures,
Green as the young grass,
Mark with his trilling
Resonant bell-note,
How I adore thee. 25

Let the glad lark-song
Over the meadow,
That melting lyric
Of molten silver,
Be for a signal
To listening mortals,
How I adore thee. 30 35

But more than all sounds,
Surer, serener,
Fuller with passion

And exultation,
Let the hushed whisper
In thine own heart say,
How I adore thee.

40

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics*, translated by Bliss Carman

The Goblet

Every hand that touches me I greet
With kisses welcoming, caresses sweet.

Thus in my crystal's naked beauty, I--
With nothing save a little gold as on my lips a dye--
Give myself wholly to the mouth unknown
That seeks the burning of my own.

Queen of joy,--queen and slave,--
Mistress that taken passes on again,
Mocking the love she throws to still
Desire, I have blown madness at my pleasure's will
To the four winds that rave.

Say you that I am vain?
List!
I am feeble, scarcely I exist ...
Yet listen: for I can be everything.

This mouth, that never any kiss could close,
Capriciously in subtle fires it blows,
The jewelled garlands of a shadowy blossoming.

Tulip of gold or ruby, dense
Corolla of dark purple opulence,
Stem of a lily diamond
Flowered upon a limpid pond
That nothing save the beak of wood-doves troubles,
I am sparkling, I am singing,--and I laugh to see,
Ascending in this colourless soul of me,
As might a dream, a thousand iridescent bubbles.

For the lover drunken on my lips that burn,
Whether he pour in turn
The wines of gold and flame or love's wave to my rim,

Drinks from my soul for ever strange to him
A queenly splendour or the radiance of the skies,
Or fury scorching where the harmful ruby lies
In the bitter counsel of my jealous topazes.

And, tears or joy, delirium, daring drunkenness,
From all this passion that to his is married
Nothing of me will gush unto his arid
Lips, save the simple and the limpid light
Whose gleam is wedded to my empty chalice.

What matter? I have given Desire his cloudland palace,
And on my courtesan's bare breast
Love lets the hope of his diaphanous flight
Languish, and softly rest ...
And I laugh, the fragile, frivolous sister of Eve!
For me in nights of madness drunken hands upheave
Higher than all foreheads to the constellated skies,
And then I am the sudden star of lies,
That into troubled joys darts deep its radiant gleam--
The sweet, perfidious happiness of Dream.

ALBERT MOCKEL.

1866--.

from: The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Contemporary Belgian Poetry*, by Various,
Edited and Translated by Jethro Bithell

The Road To The Bow

Ever and ever anon,
After the black storm, the eternal, beauteous bow!
Brother, to rosy-painted mists that arch beyond,
Blithely I go.

My brows men laureled and my lyre
Twined with immortal ivy for one little rippling song;
My "House of Golden Leaves" they praised and "passionate fire"--
But, Friend, the way is long!

Onward and onward, up! away!
Though Fear flaunt all his banners in my face,
And my feet stumble, lo! the Orphean Day!
Forward by God's grace!

These signs are still before me: "Fear,"
"Danger," "Unprecedented," and I hear black "No"
Still thundering, and "Churl." Good Friend, I rest me here--
Then to the glittering bow!

Loometh and cometh Hate in wrath,
Mailed Wrong, swart Servitude and Shame with bitter rue,
Nathless a Negro poet's feet must tread the path
The winged god knew.

Thus, my true Brother, dream-led, I
Forefend the anathema, following the span.
I hold my head as proudly high
As any man.

by James D. Carrothers
from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Book of American Negro Poetry*
by Edited by James Weldon Johnson

The Legend Beautiful

“Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled!”
That is what the Vision said.

In his chamber all alone,
Kneeling on the floor of stone,
Prayed the Monk in deep contrition
For his sins of indecision,
Prayed for greater self-denial
In temptation and in trial;
It was noonday by the dial,
And the Monk was all alone.

Suddenly, as if it lighten'd,
An unwonted splendour brighten'd
All within him and without him
In that narrow cell of stone;
And he saw the Blessed Vision
Of our Lord, with light Elysian
Like a vesture wrapped about him,
Like a garment round him thrown.

Not as crucified and slain,
Not in agonies of pain,

Not with bleeding hands and feet,
Did the Monk his Master see;
But as in the village street,
In the house or harvest-field,
Halt and lame and blind he healed,
When he walked in Galilee.

In an attitude imploring,
Hands upon his bosom crossed,
Wondering, worshipping, adoring,
Knelt the Monk in rapture lost.
Lord, he thought, in heaven that reignest,
Who am I, that thus thou deignest
To reveal thyself to me?
Who am I, that from the centre
Of thy glory thou shouldst enter
This poor cell, my guest to be?

Then amid his exaltation,
Loud the convent bell appalling,
From its belfry calling, calling,
Rang through court and corridor
With persistent iteration
He had never heard before.
It was now the appointed hour
When alike in sun or shower,
Winter's cold or summer's heat,
To the convent portals came
All the blind and halt and lame,
All the beggars of the street,
For their daily dole of food
Dealt them by the brotherhood;
And their almoner was he
Who upon his bended knee,
Rapt in silent ecstasy
Of divinest self-surrender,
Saw the Vision and the Splendour.

Deep distress and hesitation
Mingled with his adoration;
Should he go or should he stay?
Should he leave the poor to wait
Hungry at the convent gate,
Till the Vision passed away?
Should he slight his radiant guest,
Slight his visitant celestial,
For a crowd of ragged, bestial
Beggars at the convent gate?
Would the Vision there remain?

Would the Vision come again?

Then a voice within his breast
Whispered, audible and clear,
As if to the outward ear:
“Do thy duty; that is best;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest!”
Straightway to his feet he started,
And with longing look intent
On the Blessed Vision bent,
Slowly from his cell departed,
Slowly on his errand went.

At the gate the poor were waiting,
Looking through the iron grating,
With that terror in the eye
That is only seen in those
Who amid their wants and woes
Hear the sound of doors that close,
And of feet that pass them by;
Grown familiar with disfavour,
Grown familiar with the savour
Of the bread by which men die!
But to-day, they knew not why,
Like the gate of Paradise
Seemed the convent gate to rise,
Like a sacrament divine
Seemed to them the bread and wine.
In his heart the Monk was praying,
Thinking of the homeless poor,
What they suffer and endure;
What we see not, what we see;
And the inward voice was saying:
“Whatsoever thing thou doest
To the least of mine and lowest,
That thou doest unto me!”

Unto me! but had the Vision
Come to him in beggar’s clothing,
Come a mendicant imploring,
Would he then have knelt adoring,
Or have listened with derision,
And have turned away with loathing?

Thus his conscience put the question,
Full of troublesome suggestion,
As at length, with hurried pace,
Towards his cell he turned his face,
And beheld the convent bright

With a supernatural light,
Like a luminous cloud expanding
Over floor and wall and ceiling.

But he paused with awe-struck feeling
At the threshold of his door,
For the Vision still was standing
As he left it there before,
When the convent bell appalling,
From its belfry calling, calling,
Summoned him to feed the poor.

Through the long hour intervening
It had waited his return,
And he felt his bosom burn,
Comprehending all the meaning,
When the Blessed Vision said,
“Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled!”

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

from: Project Gutenberg's *The Cambridge Book of Poetry for Children*, by Various

An HYMN to the EVENING.

SOON as the sun forsook the eastern main
The pealing thunder shook the heav'nly plain;
Majestic grandeur! From the zephyr's wing,
Exhales the incense of the blooming spring.
Soft purl the streams, the birds renew their notes,
And through the air their mingled music floats.
Through all the heav'ns what beauteous dies are spread!
But the west glories in the deepest red:
So may our breasts with ev'ry virtue glow,
The living temples of our God below!
Fill'd with the praise of him who gives the light,
And draws the sable curtains of the night,
Let placid slumbers sooth each weary mind,
At morn to wake more heav'nly, more refin'd;
So shall the labours of the day begin
More pure, more guarded from the snares of sin.
Night's leaden sceptre seals my drowsy eyes,
Then cease, my song, till fair Aurora rise.

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Religious and Moral Poems*, by Phillis Wheatley
(to Vicky Jones)

La Chevelure

O toison, moutonnant jusque sur l'encolure!
O boucles! O parfum chargé de nonchaloir!
Extase! Pour peupler ce soir l'alcôve obscure
Des souvenirs dormant dans cette chevelure,
Je la veux agiter dans l'air comme un mouchoir.

La langoureuse Asie et la brûlante Afrique,
Tout un monde lointain, absent, presque défunt,
Vit dans tes profondeurs, forêt aromatique!
Comme d'autres esprits voguent sur la musique,
Le mien, ô mon amour! nage sur ton parfum.

J'irai là-bas où l'arbre et l'homme, pleins de sève,
Se pâment longuement sous l'ardeur des climats;
Fortes tresses, soyez la houle qui m'enlève!
Tu contiens, mer d'ébène, un éblouissant rêve
De voiles, de rameurs, de flammes et de mâts:

Un port retentissant où mon âme peut boire
A grands flots le parfum, le son et la couleur;
Où les vaisseaux, glissant dans l'or et dans la moire,
Ouvrent leurs vastes bras pour embrasser la gloire
D'un ciel pur où frémit l'éternelle chaleur.

Je plongerai ma tête amoureuse d'ivresse
Dans ce noir océan où l'autre est enfermé;
Et mon esprit subtil que le roulis caresse
Saura vous retrouver, ô féconde paresse,
Infinis bercements du loisir embaumé!

Cheveux bleus, pavillon de ténèbres tendues,
Vous me rendez l'azur du ciel immense et rond;
Sur les bords duvetés de vos mèches tordues
Je m'enivre ardemment des senteurs confondues
De l'huile de coco, du musc et du goudron.

Longtemps! toujours! ma main dans ta crinière lourde
Sèmera le rubis, la perle et le saphir,
Afin qu'à mon, désir tu ne sois jamais sourde!
N'es-tu pas l'oasis où je rêve, et la gourde
Où je hume à longs traits le vin du souvenir?

Je t'adore à l'égal de la voûte nocturne,

O vase de tristesse, ô grande taciturne,
Et t'aime d'autant plus, belle, que tu me fuis,
Et que tu me parais, ornement de mes nuits,
Plus ironiquement accumuler les lieues
Qui séparent mes bras des immensités bleues.

Je m'avance à l'attaque, et je grimpe aux assauts,
Comme après un cadavre un choeur de vermisseaux,
Et je chéris, ô bête implacable et cruelle,
Jusqu'à cette froideur par où tu m'es plus belle!

Tu mettrais l'univers entier dans ta ruelle,
Femme impure! L'ennui rend ton âme cruelle.
Pour exercer tes dents à ce jeu singulier,
Il te faut chaque jour un coeur au râtelier.
Tes yeux, illuminés ainsi que des boutiques
Ou des ifs flamboyants dans les fêtes publiques,
Usent insolemment d'un pouvoir emprunté,
Sans connaître jamais la loi de leur beauté.

Machine aveugle et sourde en cruauté féconde!
Salutaire instrument, buveur du sang du monde,
Comment n'as-tu pas honte, et comment n'as-tu pas
Devant tous les miroirs vu pâlir tes appas?
La grandeur de ce mal où tu te crois savante
Ne t'a donc jamais fait reculer d'épouvante,
Quand la nature, grande en ses desseins cachés,
De toi se sert, ô femme, ô reine des péchés,
--De toi, vil animal,--pour pétrir un génie?

O fangeuse grandeur, sublime ignominie!

Translation, by Cyril Scott:

O fleece, that foams down unto the shoulders bare!
O curls, O scents which lovely languidness exhale!
Delight! to fill this alcove's sombre atmosphere
With memories, sleeping deep within this tress of hair,
I'll wave it in the evening breezes like a veil!

The shores of Africa, and Asia's burning skies,
A world forgotten, distant, nearly dead and spent,
Within thy depths, O aromatic forest! lies.
And like to spirits floating unto melodies,
Mine own, Belovèd! glides within thy sacred scent.

There I will hasten, where the trees and humankind

With languor lull beside the hot and silent sea;
Strong tresses bear me, be to me the waves and wind!
Within thy fragrance lies a dazzling dream confined
Of sails and masts and flames--O lake of ebony!

A loudly echoing harbour, where my soul may hold
To quaff, the silver cup of colours, scents and sounds,
Wherein the vessels glide upon a sea of gold,
And stretch their mighty arms, the glory to enfold
Of virgin skies, where never-ending heat abounds.

I'll plunge my brow, enamoured with voluptuousness
Within this darkling ocean of infinitude,
Until my subtle spirit, which thy waves caress,
Shall find you once again, O fertile weariness;
Unending lullabye of perfumed lassitude!

Ye tresses blue--recess of strange and sombre shades,
Ye make the azure of the starry Realm immense;
Upon the downy beeches, by your curls' cascades,
Among your mingling fragrances, my spirit wades
To cull the musk and cocoa-nut and lotus scents.

Long--foraye--my hand, within thy heavy mane,
Shall scatter rubies, pearls, sapphires eternally,
And thus my soul's desire for thee shall never wane;
For art not thou the oasis where I dream and drain
With draughts profound, the golden wine of memory?

from: The Project Gutenberg EBooks of *Les Fleurs du Mal*,
and *The Flowers of Evil*, by Charles Baudelaire

Presences

This night has been so strange that it seemed
As if the hair stood up on my head.
From going-down of the sun I have dreamed
That women laughing, or timid or wild,
In rustle of lace or silken stuff,
Climbed up my creaking stair. They had read
All I had rhymed of that monstrous thing
Returned and yet unrequited love.
They stood in the door and stood between
My great wood lectern and the fire

Till I could hear their hearts beating:
One is a harlot, and one a child
That never looked upon man with desire,
And one it may be a queen.

from: Project Gutenberg's *The Wild Swans at Coole*, by William Butler (W.B.) Yeats

The Neighbour

Strange violin! Dost thou follow me?
In many foreign cities, far away,
Thy lone voice spoke to me like memory.
Do hundreds play thee, or does but one play?

Are there in all great cities tempest-tossed
Men who would seek the rivers but for thee,

Who, but for thee, would be forever lost?
Why drifts thy lonely voice always to me?
Why am I the neighbour always
Of those who force to sing thy trembling strings?
Life is more heavy--thy song says--
Than the vast, heavy burden of all things.

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Poems*, by Rainer Maria Rilke, translation by Jessie Lemont

In Early Summer Lodging In A Temple To Enjoy The Moonlight

[_A.D. 805_]

In early summer, with two or three more
That were seeking fame in the city of Ch'ang-an,
Whose low employ gave them less business
Than ever they had since first they left their homes,--
With these I wandered deep into the shrine of Tao,
For the joy we sought was promised in this place.
When we reached the gate, we sent our coaches back;
We entered the yard with only cap and stick.
Still and clear, the first weeks of May,
When trees are green and bushes soft and wet;

When the wind has stolen the shadows of new leaves
And birds linger on the last boughs that bloom.
Towards evening when the sky grew clearer yet
And the South-east was still clothed in red,
To the western cloister we carried our jar of wine;
While we waited for the moon, our cups moved slow.
Soon, how soon her golden ghost was born,
Swiftly, as though she had waited for us to come.
The beams of her light shone in every place,
On towers and halls dancing to and fro.
Till day broke we sat in her clear light
Laughing and singing, and yet never grew tired.
In Ch'ang-an, the place of profit and fame,
Such moods as this, how many men know?

PO CHU-I

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *More Translations from the Chinese*, by Arthur Waley

A Visit

I was sitting at the open window ... in the morning, the early morning of
the first of May.

The dawn had not yet begun; but already the dark, warm night grew pale and
chill at its approach.

No mist had risen, no breeze was astir, all was colourless and still ...
but the nearness of the awakening could be felt, and the rarer air smelt
keen and moist with dew.

Suddenly, at the open window, with a light whirr and rustle, a great bird
flew into my room.

I started, looked closely at it.... It was not a bird; it was a tiny winged
woman, dressed in a narrow long robe flowing to her feet.

She was grey all over, the colour of mother-of-pearl; only the inner side
of her wings glowed with the tender flush of an opening rose; a wreath of
valley lilies entwined the scattered curls upon her little round head; and,
like a butterfly's feelers, two peacock feathers waved drolly above her
lovely rounded brow.

She fluttered twice about the ceiling; her tiny face was laughing;
laughing, too, were her great, clear, black eyes.

The gay frolic of her sportive flight set them flashing like diamonds.

She held in her hand the long stalk of a flower of the steppes--‘the Tsar’s sceptre,’ the Russians call it--it is really like a sceptre.

Flying rapidly above me, she touched my head with the flower.

I rushed towards her.... But already she had fluttered out of window, and darted away....

In the garden, in a thicket of lilac bushes, a wood-dove greeted her with its first morning warble ... and where she vanished, the milk-white sky flushed a soft pink.

I know thee, Goddess of Fantasy! Thou didst pay me a random visit by the way; thou hast flown on to the young poets.

O Poesy! Youth! Virginal beauty of woman! Thou couldst shine for me but for a moment, in the early dawn of early spring!

May 1878.

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Dream Tales and Prose Poems*, by Ivan Turgenev, translation by Constance Garnett

Dawn At Lesbos

UNDER lifting wings of the sullen darkness,
Ere the East was red with the blush of Eos,
Lesbos rose, an isle in a sea of opal,
Out of the shadow;

Dimly rose, and out of the dreaming distance,
Out of waves that woke with a sighing ripple,
Seemed a lyre for gods that the bending heaven
Guarded in silence;

But the ruthless lances of light assailed it,
Sudden light that, striking from hill to valley,
Made the olives shine on the crest and shimmer
Green to the water;

Green as waves that leaped in the sun to sapphire,
Waves that laughed and kissed with a foaming whisper,
While the wheeling legions of dawn were sweeping
Night from the summit;

Then our eyes, entranced with the ancient wonder,
Saw upflame the slope in a snow of blossoms,
Mitylene, trailing her bright iEgean
Vesture of azure;

Crowned again with pride of an olden April,
Pride of deathless song and of templed glory,
Seeming now, as once from a Roman galley,
Music to vision;

Yet we knew a strain to the ear diviner,
Not of dawn, the nightingale in the orchard,
Sappho's own, with grief in the note ecstatic,
Mourning her ever.

from the Internet Archive etext of *Embers*, by John Myers O'Hara

The Chatelaine

I have built one, so have you;
Paved with marble, domed with blue,
Battlement and ladies' bower,
Donjon keep and watchman's tower.

I have climbed, as you have done,
To the tower at set of sun --
Crying from its parlous height,
"Watchman, tell us of the night."

I have stolen at midnight bell,
Like you, to the secret cell,
Shuddering at its charnel breath --
Left lockfast the spectre, Death.

I have used your lure to call
Choice guests to my golden hall:
Rarely welcome, rarely free
To my hospitality.

In a glow of rosy light
Hours, like minutes, take their flight --
As from you they fled away,
When, like you, I bade them stay.

Ah! the pretty flow of wit,
And the good hearts under it;
While the wheels of life go round
With a most melodious sound.

Not a vestige anywhere
Of our grim familiar, Care --
Roses! from the trees of yore
Blooming by the rivers four.

Not a jar, and not a fret;
Ecstasy and longing met.
But why should I thus define --
Is not your chateau like mine?

Scarcely were it strange to meet
In that magic realm so sweet,
So! I'll take this dreamland train
Bound for my chateau in Spain.

by M. A. Sinclair.

from: The Project Gutenberg Etext of *An Anthology of Australian Verse*

Satirical Letrillias.--III.

Such is, dear girl, my tenderness,
Naught can its equal be!
If thou a dowry didst possess
The charms to rival of thy face,
I would marry thee.

Thou wert my bliss, my star, my all!
So kind and fair to see;
And me thy consort to instal,
At once for witness Heaven I call,
I would marry thee.

Thou dost adore me? yes, and I,
Thy love so raptures me,
If thou wouldst not so anxious try
To know my pay, and what I buy,
I would marry thee.

If thou wert not so always coy,

Ne'er listening to my plea,
But when I, fool! my cash employ
To bring thee sweets, or some fine toy,
I would marry thee.

If thou must not instructions wait,
As may mamma agree,
To write or speak to me, or state
When thou wilt meet me at the gate,
I would marry thee.

If 'twere not when to dine, the most
Thy meagre soup bouillie
Thou givest, as many airs thou show'st,
As Roderic at the hanging-post,
I would marry thee.

If for my punishment instead
Of ease and quiet, we
Might not three hungry brothers dread,
And mother too, to keep when wed,
I would marry thee.

If 'twere not when these plagues combine
With thy tears flowing free,
The virtues of a heavenly sign
I see must solace me, not thine,
I would marry thee.

Go, get another in thy chain,
And Heaven for you decree
A thousand joys, for me 'tis vain;
I know thee cheat, and tell thee plain,
I will not marry thee.

by Manuel Breton De Los Herreros
from: Project Gutenberg's *Modern Poets and Poetry of Spain*, by James Kennedy

Cité Des Vaisseaux

Cité des vaisseaux!
(O les vaisseaux noirs! O les vaisseaux farouches!
O les splendides vapeurs et voiliers à la proue effilée!)
Cité du monde! (car ici confluent toutes les races,
Ici tous les pays de la terre collaborent);

Cité de la mer! Cité des flux précipités et chatoyants!
Cité dont les flots joyeux accourent ou dévalent sans
cesse, entrant et sortant en tourbillons semés de
remous et d'écume!
Cité des quais de marchandises et des magasins--cité
des façades géantes de marbre et de fer!
Cité fière et passionnée--cité fougueuse, folle, extravagante!
Debout, ô cité--tu n'es pas faite seulement pour la
paix, mais sois vraiment toi-même, sois guerrière!
N'aie pas peur--ne te soumets à nul autre modèle que
les tiens, ô cité!
Regarde-moi--incarne-moi comme je t'ai incarnée!
Je n'ai rien rejeté de ce que tu m'as offert,--ceux que
tu as adoptés je les ai adoptés,
Bonne ou mauvaise je ne te discute jamais--je chéris
tout--je ne condamne rien,
Je chante et célèbre tout ce qui est tien--cependant
je ne chante plus la paix:
En paix, j'ai chanté la paix, mais à présent le tambour
de guerre est mon instrument,
Et la guerre, la guerre rouge, est le chant que je vais
chantant par tes rues, ô cité!

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Poèmes de Walt Whitman*, Translator: Léon Bazalgette

Mannahatta

I was asking for something specific and perfect for my city,
Whereupon lo! upsprang the aboriginal name.

Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane, unruly,
musical, self-sufficient,
I see that the word of my city is that word from of old,
Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays, superb,
Rich, hemm'd thick all around with sailships and steamships, an
island sixteen miles long, solid-founded,
Numberless crowded streets, high growths of iron, slender, strong,
light, splendidly uprising toward clear skies,
Tides swift and ample, well-loved by me, toward sundown,
The flowing sea-currents, the little islands, larger adjoining
islands, the heights, the villas,
The countless masts, the white shore-steamers, the lighters, the
ferry-boats, the black sea-steamers well-model'd,
The down-town streets, the jobbers' houses of business, the houses
of business of the ship-merchants and money-brokers, the river-streets,
Immigrants arriving, fifteen or twenty thousand in a week,

The carts hauling goods, the manly race of drivers of horses, the
brown-faced sailors,
The summer air, the bright sun shining, and the sailing clouds aloft,
The winter snows, the sleigh-bells, the broken ice in the river,
passing along up or down with the flood-tide or ebb-tide,
The mechanics of the city, the masters, well-form'd,
beautiful-faced, looking you straight in the eyes,
Trottoirs throng'd, vehicles, Broadway, the women, the shops and shows,
A million people--manners free and superb--open voices--hospitality--
the most courageous and friendly young men,
City of hurried and sparkling waters! city of spires and masts!
City nested in bays! my city!

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Leaves of Grass*, by Walt Whitman

Thine Eyes.

Thine eyes are as bright, O thou sweetest gazelle,
As the glittering rays of the sun's golden spell,
And thy face glows as fair in the light of the day
As the red blushing sky when the morning is gay.

Thy tresses of gold are as neatly bedight,
As though they were wrought by enchantment's kind might;
Thou openest thy lips in a smile or a sigh,
And thy pearly teeth gleam like the stars in the sky.

Ah, shall I praise the bright charm of thine eyes,
That move every heart, that win all by surprise?
For peerless thy charms, and unequalled thy birth;
Thou art of heaven, all _others_ of earth.

Immanuel Di Roma
Machberoth, Chapter XVI
from Project Gutenberg's *Hebrew Humor and other Essays*, by Joseph Chotzner

The Bridge

The lonely bridge cuts dark across the marsh
Whose long pools glow with the light
Of a flaring summer sunset.
At this end limp bushes overhang,
Palely reflected in the amber-colored water;
Among them a constant banjo-twanging of frogs,
And shrilling of toads and of insects
Rises and falls in chorus rhythmic and stirring.

Dark, with crumbling railing and planks,
The bridge leads into the sunset.
Across it many lonely figures,
Their eyes a-flare with the sunset,
Their faces glowing with its colors,
Tramp past me through the evening.

I am tired of sitting quiet
Among the bushes of the shore,
While the dark bridge stretches onward,
And the long pools gleam with light;
I am tired of the shrilling of insects
And the croaking of frogs in the rushes,
For the wild rice in the marsh-pools
Waves its beckoning streamers in the wind,
And the red sky-glory fades.

by John R. Dos Passos
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